

Creating Community Connections

Behavioral Health Ethics for Case Managers

Tami Brucato, MSSW, CSW, KPS

Workshop Objectives

- **Ethical guidelines and potential dilemmas in case management**
 - Identify at least 4 areas of potential ethical conflict when working with individuals with behavioral health disorders
 - Identify at least 5 questions to ask oneself when faced with possible ethical dilemmas

Definitions

- **Ethics**

- What is meant by the term “ethics”?
- What is the primary value guiding your decision in that definition?

Definitions

- **Merriam Webster defines ethics as:**
 - rules of behavior based on ideas about what is morally good and bad
 - an area of study that deals with ideas about what is good and bad behavior
 - a set of moral principles
 - a guiding philosophy



Definitions

- **According to Cambridge Dictionary:**
 - the study of what is morally right and wrong, or a set of beliefs about what is morally right and wrong.
- **Oxford Dictionary describes ethics as:**
 - the moral correctness of specified conduct.

Defining Case Management

- “Recognition that case management is guided by the principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice.”
 - Code of Professional Conduct for Case Managers, 2009

Guiding Principles

- What is autonomy?
- What is beneficence?
- What is nonmaleficence?
- What is justice?

Areas of Possible Ethical Violations

- **“Aspiring to be ethical at its most primitive level involves sustained vigilance in preventing harm and injury to those whom we have pledged our loyalty. There are at least four situations in which a [case manager] can cause harm or injury.” – William White**

Areas of Possible Ethical Violations

- What does it mean to harm or injure another person?
- What does it mean to pledge loyalty to another person?

Areas of Possible Ethical Violations

1. Good intentions that cause unintended harm/injury
2. Assume special duty/obligation for care requiring objectivity, support and protection

Areas of Possible Ethical Violations

3. Actions may increase intimacy in a relationship
4. Actions impact parties outside the TCM/client relationship

Recovery-Oriented Case Management

- **Defining RECOVERY**

- A process of change through which an individual improves health and wellness, lives a self-directed life, and strives to reach their full potential

- **Four dimensions**

- Health

- Home

- Purpose

- Community

10 Guiding Principles of Recovery

- Hope
- Person-Driven
- Many Pathways
- Holistic
- Peer Support
- Relational
- Culture
- Addresses Trauma
- Strengths/Responsibilities
- Respect

Core Recovery Values

- affirm everyone's ability to learn and grow;
- communicate a sense of hope and possibility;
- respect the rights and dignity of the individuals served, including any written communication about them;
- keep the focus on the individual's strengths, assets and possibilities;
- accept, affirm and validate the individual where he/she is and honor his/her decisions;
- communicate that there are many roads to recovery;

Core Recovery Values

- keep the individual's well-being as the primary concern;
- give the individual as many choices and options as possible;
- help the individual become fully integrated into the community of ***their choice***;
- maintain confidentiality and not provide identifying information;
- communicate that recovery and treatment for one's illness is voluntary;
- sustain and preserve objective and professional relationships;
- not push one's beliefs or experiences onto another individual;

Core Recovery Values

- keep personal interests from conflicting with the interests of the individual;
- not use the unique relationship to unduly persuade or coerce;
- work within the limits of their experience and training;
- preserve boundaries that promote recovery;
- work in partnership with others to meet the needs of the individuals served;
- take adequate measures to discourage any unethical conduct;
- communicate that all services should promote a person's recovery; and
- honor agency guidelines, policies and principles of conduct.

- Which of these recovery values caught your attention?
- Are there any you don't understand?
- Are there any values that conflict with your values as a case manager?

Questions that Guide Ethical Decision Making

1. Why am I questioning my actions in this situation?

*Questions that Guide
Ethical Decision Making*

2. Is there an agency policy regarding this situation?

*Questions that Guide
Ethical Decision Making*

3. Is this something I need to discuss with my supervisor?

*Questions that Guide
Ethical Decision Making*

4. Does this in any way complicate or negatively impact my relationship with this individual?

*Questions that Guide
Ethical Decision Making*

5. Out of all the options,
why this one?

Final Reflections

- Everyone has potential, gifts, talents, hopes, dreams and possibilities. We must always look at others in a deeper dimension than how they look, act or present themselves. The people we work with have been disabled by this label of mental illness. Deep within, everyone begs to be treated with dignity and respect. Everyone we interact with is a priceless human being with the same potentials that we have.

Tami Brucato, MSSW, CSW, KPS

tbrucatomssw@yahoo.com

(270) 943-1851

